

# DWIGHT'S Journal of Music. A Paper of Art and Literature.

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## Dwight's Journal of Music,

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Its contents will relate mainly to the art of MUSIC, but with occasional glances at the whole world of Art and of polite Literature, indeed at every thing pertaining to the cultivation of the Beautiful; including from time to time:

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### MOZART'S DON GIOVANNI.

[The relation of this immortal music to the story and *libretto* is happily shown in the following imaginary conversation between the musician and the poet, each speaking from his own point of view. It is from a remarkable work (written by a Russian) upon the Life and Genius of MOZART, of which we are preparing a translation for the press.]

If we examine the scenes of the libretto singly, we find at first a want of connection and a strange medley, as if the most heterogeneous elements of dramatic poetry had been thrown into a bag and shaken up, and then drawn out like the numbers in a lottery. In fact what do we see? A merry marriage, and on the way to it a bloody corpse; love breaking its first vow, and life expiring with its last gasp; an orgy in the house of the living, and in the churchyard a monument that speaks; trivial fun and drollery, mingled with attempted deeds of violence, with murder, cries of despair, oaths of revenge and apparitions from the tomb; a banquet with champagne and spiced with music, and Death in person as a guest; Melpomene and Harlequin, men and demons, dancing at the same feast! Then, when all this crowd has whirled round to dizziness within this phantasmagoric circle, when all the contrasts of human nature have exhausted themselves in these Saturnalia of the imagination, every one withdraws, scarce knowing whither, with the exception of the hero of the piece, who goes to hell.

Can you imagine how DA PONTE, the successor of METASTASIO, the court poet at Vienna, nourished on the milk of the most sound and classic doctrines, could, in the year of grace 1787, have soared in this singular work to the highest pitch of romance, which reminds one of the "Mysteries" of the middle ages, and which, forsaking all the traditions of dramatic art in the eighteenth century, could not seem good enough for anything but a puppet show! Many years had flown since "Don Juan" was first put upon the stage, when the critics cried out about the absurdity of the poem, though they admitted that it had afforded to the composer the matter for a music, the like of which was never heard before. They did not explain this accident, for accident admits no explanation; besides, they were in the right. The libretto without the music is as absurd as possible; and yet this absurd text and this sublime music form together but one body and one soul; and yet, for all that, there is no one who will not recognize how far the images of the composer

exceed the contour of their poetic outlines, and how little they are like them too. No one will fail to see in the story of Don Juan, as it is moulded by the music, an order of things entirely foreign to the contents of the libretto.

We wish to point the attention of the reader, with the finger, so to speak, to the difference in the points of view from which the musician and the poet proceeded. If you consider them singly, their intention is divided, indeed sometimes even opposed; yet there is throughout an understanding and a harmony between them, as soon as you take them together. To this end we imagine a sort of historical romance, but without any outlay of fancy,—a dialogue, in which the authors of "Don Juan" talk over their design, one proceeding from the letter of his poem, the other from the spirit of his score. Both seem to us to be so clear, that we run no risk, if we translate their thoughts.

MOZART. My dear Abbé, I want a text for an opera, but do not give me, I beg you, another French comedy. This time I have to do neither with the court, nor with Vienna. I am to work for the Prague public, who understand every syllable from me, and for the orchestra in Prague, who play me at sight. The *troupe* is excellent, and the singers can do everything I ask of them. It is precisely as if MOZART were working for MOZART. It must do me honor. I should like to have something out of the common run. Help me to it.

DA PONTE. You could not come more opportunely. I am just now engaged upon a text. It is taken from an old comedy by TIRSO DE MOLINA, and is called: "The Marble Guest, or the Scape-grace of Seville." MOLIERE and GOLDONI have made comedies out of it; I have an idea of working it up into an opera. It is the most remarkable tale of *diablerie*. Nothing like it was ever offered to the dilettanti; only I feared that no composer would be pleased with it.

MOZART. Let me see what there is in this devil story.

DA PONTE. In the first place there is an equestrian statue, who, being invited to a supper, gets off his horse, because it would not be quite the thing to enter a saloon borne upon four feet. The statue refuses to eat anything; on the contrary, he holds forth to the master of the house, a precious scamp, in a very edifying discourse, and thereupon takes him down with himself to hell. That will be very fine, I assure you. A player

with chalked face, a delft helmet, white glazed gloves, and a complete Roman suit of armor manufactured of old linen. (Laughs.) Moreover there will be lightning out of all the trap-doors, and devils of every hue. About one thing only I am in despair, you see. And that is the speech of the spectre; for, although I flatter myself that I understand my trade as well as any one, I am not SHAKSPEARE, that I can make ghosts speak.

**MOZART.** No matter what he says. Death will speak in my orchestra, and in a way to be understood. I know too well how he speaks. Excellent! The statue is a settled matter. What else is there?

**DA PONTE.** Next there is a beautiful lady; the statue is her father, who was killed in single combat by the reprobate, the hero of the piece. The Signorina weeps, is naturally quite inconsolable, and indeed the more so, since the traitor has nearly played her a very base trick, her, the daughter of a Commandatore, and what is more, the betrothed of the handsomest young man in Andalusia. She swears to be revenged. So far it all goes well for you, maestro; but now comes the bad part. The young man, who expects to marry her, and who is charged with the duty of avenging her father, makes many promises, in fact he draws his sword; but before the knave, who is as resolute and brave as four, he loses his presence of mind, and the sword improves this opportunity to slip quietly back into the scabbard. Our lover is, I confess, a poor knight. You see him always following the footseps of his beloved, like a prolongation of the train of her black robe. There was no means of representing him otherwise; so that the lamentations of the Signorina and her schemes of revenge bring nothing to pass.

**MOZART.** You would bring the impossible to pass! You would hasten the justice of heaven! You would wake up the dead from their graves! You ought to comprehend that it is the imperious cry, the superhuman cry for vengeance, which brings in the statue. Between these things there is an obvious connection. Abbé, I am in raptures with our prima donna; I would have chosen her among thousands. As for the bridegroom, he deserves not your reproaches. How can you desire the poverino to do battle with this incarnate devil, who offers a glass of wine to the ghost of the old man whom he has murdered? The daughter's husband would have gone after his father-in-law, and then, as in "Figaro," we should have had no tenore. A fine advantage! Caro amico, you know not what such a man is; I understand your scape-grace; but patience! when you shall see him on the stage, facing the statue, his eyes flashing with desperation, irony and blasphemy upon his lips, while the hairs of the audience stand on end (I will look out for that!); when he shall say: parla! che chiedi? che vuoi? (speak! what do you ask? what do you want?); then you will recognize him. No, no, a reprobate of this stamp can not be punished by the hand of a living mortal. It would make the devil jealous. Body and soul, the devil alone must have all; have compassion therefore on the young man. He promises, he would, he even tries: is not that all a prima donna could require of a loyal tenor in such a case! You see, the life of our lover is altogether an internal life; it is all spent in his love; it will be great and beautiful, my word for it. (Looking over the man-

script.) You make him swear by the eyes of his beloved, by the blood of the murdered old man. What a duett!

**DA PONTE.** Truly, maestro, you are right. What a blockhead I was not to see how much wit I had; that seldom happens with my peers! But will you be as well contented with the rest, which I have yet to lay before you? This villain is a terrible devourer of women. In Spain alone he has already swallowed one thousand and three, and the devil of a man has travelled much. You will see that I could not bring all these ladies on the stage; but I needed at least one as the representative of this host of victims. I have taken her from Burgos, where our man stole her heart, and then, what know I how or where, deserted her. This *Didone abbandonata*, wife, widow, or young lady, (for that is a point which I leave undecided), cannot digest her shame. She pursues him over hill and vale, and inquires of every one she meets about the faithless fellow. At length she finds him deeply occupied with another. Instead of offering her excuses, the *briccone* laughs in her face and leaves her with his servant. The lady never loses courage. She is persuaded to wander through the streets by night with this very servant, disguised in the cap and gold-laced mantle of his master. She perseveres in loving the traitor, and after all hope is lost, seeks at least to convert him, though compelled to renounce his possession. Between ourselves, maestro, I believe that she is mad. You see, we can make nothing else out of her.

**MOZART.** O, the noble, the adorable person! Mad, say you? yes, for you poets, who regard nothing but the actions of persons and the words, which you put into their mouths at random. But to what different interpretations are not the words, nay even the actions liable! It is necessary to look into the heart, and, next to God, it is the musician only who can look in. Mad! At all events she is good enough to excite coarse merriment! Make her say what you will, but when my music like a mirror shall reflect the image of this high-minded and devoted soul, I trust my friends will see something very different from a mad woman in her. (Looking through the manuscript.) She comes to his last supper. That is altogether admirable; the unheeded voice of the guardian angel, letting itself be heard before the voice of judgment. (After musing a while.) Besides, this passionate and energetic person is the necessary link between the other persons, the two most prominent of whom, as I already perceive, are destined to a passive part. *Didone abbandonata* shall be the angel of the drama, and, so far as the music is concerned, the nucleus of the concerted pieces. She will afford us trios, quartets, perhaps even a sextet, should there be occasion. I have found a relish in the sextet, since we tried it in "Figaro," although the lyric stuff was very poor. Is it not strange, my dear friend; the better you do your part, the less are you aware of it!

**DA PONTE.** I am satisfied, if you take it so. As to the sextet, there is an opportunity for one; we are not yet at the end of our list of persons; there is one who certainly will please you: a young rustic bride, who is open-hearted, full of feeling, a little coquettish, to be sure, and even somewhat imprudent, but only from necessity, as you shall see. A morsel worthy of you, my gallant maestro!

**MOZART.** And of thee too, thou holy man of an Abbé.\* We know you.

**DA PONTE.** The scape-grace meets her with her wedding procession. He is a connoisseur, this scape-grace, we do him the justice to acknowledge that, and he has always a plenty of intrigues on hand. A moment suffices for him to lead the wedding guests aside as well as the bridegroom, who is a blockhead, a regular simpleton. The peasant bride is on the point of falling into the snare, like a lured bird, when some one grasps her arm and holds her back. This is our *Didone abbandonata*, who carries off the prize from the *briccone* in the very nick of time. This master in the art of seduction however is not put down; he tries to to use force, which happily does not succeed. The bridegroom, blockhead as he is, is nevertheless enraged and means to have his rights; but it turns out, I do not know exactly why, that he, instead of administering blows, gets them himself, and well laid on. He howls like one possessed. The little lady comes running in at his cry, and examines the bumps and bruises they have left upon the dear man with the butt of his own musket. A trifle! the little lady knows a specific, that will heal him in a moment. You must not forget, maestro, that the night just commencing is that of her wedding day. I have done the best I could, caro maestro, and have written a sort of Cavatina.

**MOZART.** Let us see the Cavatina. (Reads.) Vedrai carino, &c. Hem! a very poorly disguised ——! Well, you could not have made it anything else; but my plan, do you understand it? is to describe in music the sweetest moment of life, the heart's supreme bliss and ecstasy! Another poet would have tried to express this in his way, and would have just spoiled it all for me; but you, whom I love as the apple of my eye, you, my devoted comrade, my faithful Pylades, you, the true poet of the composer, you take my hand, lay it upon a heart beating with rapture, and say to me: *sentilo battere* (feel it beat). Now indeed, it is for me to feel and to make others feel. All the ecstasy of love shall express itself in this Cavatina; glowing and chaste shall it be, in spite of the text. The text gives the language of a peasant girl; it becomes her; the music shall be its soul, the soul of MOZART, as he led his Constance to the nuptial bed. You see, I am already madly in love with our country maiden.

**DA PONTE.** (Somewhat excited). I knew that she would please you.

**MOZART.** (After reflecting anew.) But, dear Abbé, to what genus does our common work belong. Plainly no *opera seria* will come of it. The great scape-grace and woman-devourer, the *Didone abbandonata*, about whom they make merry, the blockhead who is jeered and cudgeled, even the statue, who accepts an invitation to supper, all this seems to be far from suitable to the heroic kind. At the most, only the daughter of the Commandatore and her lover could come on in the *cothurnus*; and your renowned predecessor, Signor Metastasio, of glorious and enduring memory, would have rejected even these with contempt, because they are neither Greeks nor Romans, neither kings nor princesses. On the other hand, a piece, which ends with the death of the principal person, and whose closing decoration is a representation of Hell, is quite as far from being an *opera buffa*. What is it then?

\* The Abbé passed for a woman-hunter.

DA PONTE. (*Almost angry.*) Corpo di Bacco! am I then a simpleton, that you can suppose I meant to make an *opera seria* of such materials. My purpose was, to write a *dramma giocoso*, and the comic element is nowhere wanting in the plot which I have the honor to explain to you. But you take the thing up in a way . . . .

MOZART. Let us not get excited. Am I not *contentissimo* with all that you have given me? *Dramma giocoso* let it be then; what care I for the title of the work? after us perhaps somebody will find a better one for it. What is of the most importance to me is, that all sorts of contrasts are found united in it; everything in this opera must be brought out in strong colors. Foolery must not look paler than crime; nor love paler than anger and revenge. Else would the last form, that of death, crush all to atoms. There is something so fine in laughter! In "*Figaro*" I have only smiled; but here I want to laugh out heartily, to unburden myself in earnest; only about whom and with whom, is so far not quite clear to me. You know my views about your alleged crazy lady. The country bumpkin, to be sure, might entertain the public by his rôle, but this does not afford much material for the score. A blockhead in music is the same thing as in the world, *poco o niente*. Have you not perhaps still another person in reserve? You smile.

DA PONTE. I see, I must produce in self-defence the very thing which I kept back at first, in order to prepare a pleasant surprise for you. Yes, my dear, we have a *buffo ex officio*, and I agree to lose my place as poet to the imperial royal troupe in Vienna; yes, I will renounce my peculiarity as an Italian to become a *Tedesco* (a German) in the broadest sense of the word, if the *buffo* is not to your taste.

MOZART. I do not doubt it. You Italians are masters in buffoonery.

DA PONTE. You Italians! And who are you, then, sir composer of the "*Marriage of Figaro*"?

MOZART. I flatter myself, I am your equal in certain respects, though not in all.

DA PONTE. And do you presume to be more than an Italian in Music?

MOZART. We will talk about that, when our present business is finished. Now the question is about the *buffo*; and if it is worth the pains, I will endeavor to make myself, so far as I am able, your compatriot.

DA PONTE. PAISIELLO would kiss my hand for his like. Judge yourself! Our buffoon is the servant, the secretary, the steward, the factotum of the *briccone*. Here it may be said: "like master, like servant." He resembles his master about as much as a well-dressed ape might have resembled the devil, before the rebellious angel had cloven feet and tail. As to the *morale* of the creature, he is a coward, a lick-spittle, a great talker, and a jester, and for the rest the best man in the world. He frankly blames the conduct of his master; he mourns most heartily over the young birds, who let themselves be caught by his amorous oglings and caresses; and this pursuit, in which he is entirely disinterested, seems to him so diverting, that he cannot help seconding with all his powers the bird-catcher, whose dexterity has inspired him with a profound admiration. He curses every day the onerous drudgeries, the long fastings and the dangers, to which the adventures of the Don expose him; every day he takes his leave, and every day his sheer

simplicity, a certain spirit of adventure, and more than all, his attachment to his master, whom he regards at the same time as a monstrous villain and as an admirable man, entangle him against his will in the most abominable transactions. You see him sticking his nose into every broil. If his own hide is in danger, the rogue slips through your fingers, like an eel, the very moment that you think you have him. Should he see the devil, he would first shut both eyes, then he would half open one of them, because the devil is a sight not always to be seen. In short he is a compound of good nature and low drollery, of cowardice and light-hearted improvidence, of awkward apishness and instinctive cleverness, of natural and original stupidity, and of some borrowed understanding. Ha! what say you to him? Have I not given you a rich conception of our *buffo*?

MOZART. Yes, above price! sketched with a master's hand; the only character that you have perfectly comprehended! It only remains for me to put on the coloring; this time, if I fulfil your design, I am lucky.

DA PONTE. I forgot to tell you, that the pleasant rogue is the editor of a private journal, for which his master furnishes him the matter. Such a delectable journal, such an awful chronicle there never was before. In it you find entered, in the order of dates and places, the names, qualities, ages, and a complete inventory of all the beauties whom his patron has honored with his attentions. I presume that you would find also a historical sketch of each adventure. For the journal already forms an immense folio volume. Naturally enough, this servant is rather proud of his labors as editor. He reads it to everybody, who will or who will not listen. As to seizing the fit hour and audience, you will see that he has about as much tact as any of his colleagues, who drive the pen. The forsaken Dido awaits an explanation; now is the time or never, thinks the historian of the king of scape-graces. Surely, nothing can console her so well as a work, in which there is a chapter especially devoted to her; and instantly he prepares this edifying lecture for her. Is not this comic?

MOZART. Comic certainly, but scandalous, and almost horrible. I will put in an apology to the audience, that they may pardon you this joke. At bottom it is quite pardonable. *Dido* is an entirely victimized person in the dramatic point of view; one wrong more, one insult less,—she is used to that, poor lady. These are all glowing coals heaped upon the head of the *briccone*! We could not collect grievances enough against him, to bring the contents of the piece into harmony with the development and the finale. But, *a propos!* how many acts has the opera?

DA PONTE. Two acts, which will certainly outweigh four.

MOZART. What shall we have for the finale of the first? I should like a grand finale with choruses and scenic action.

DA PONTE. Verily that shall not be wanting. You shall have a splendid festival, to which the *briccone* invites all the passers by. You shall have peasants, peasant-girls, and masks, ball, music, and magnificent supper. Here is the knave of a master, planning the most abominable tricks, and the knave of a servant, paving the way; others are busied with plans of revenge; the crowd

drink and dance, including the blockhead, whom they also persuade to dance, though his heart goes not to the violins. All is *pell-mell*, what we technically call a beautiful confusion. Suddenly in the midst of this gay whirl is heard a piercing shriek from an adjoining cabinet. What is the matter? They all look round, and find the young lady missing; the *briccone* too has disappeared. Ah! the traitor! ah! the arch villain! you understand. . . . They shriek, they swear, they storm, they beat the door with violence, it bursts open, and forth steps the *briccone*, sword in hand, dragging his servant by the hair. He the guilty one! O, no! bold liar. He is surrounded, encircled, pressed upon, insulted, stunned, confounded; a hundred clubs are brandished over his head. The tenor makes the most of his lungs, the women support him with their screams, as the old geese do when the goslings fight; the musicians jump over their overturned desks and rush out; a storm, which happens to be raging out of doors, comes as if called to take part in the heathenish uproar. Shrieks and confusion, seem to know no bounds. Ah, *mein Herr!* are we fairly rid then of our scape-grace; the pitcher goes to water till it breaks. No, by no means! Our *briccone*, whose eyes glare like a tiger's, his drawn sword in his right hand, hurls back with his left whatever opposes his way; he cudgels the invited guests, receives no wound and disappears behind the scenes, with a loud, devilish laugh. The curtain falls; you clap your hands with approbation.

MOZART (embracing the *Abbé* several times with enthusiasm.) Friend! brother! benefactor! What demon or what god has poured all this into thy poor poet's brain? Know, that the world owes you a monument for this finale. Tell me no more; I know the thing now better than yourself. You are a great man. You task the powers of the musician terribly, but never did a more splendid opera subject come out of the head of an artist, and never will there come such another. Let me embrace you once more, my dearest friend, and thank you in the name of all the Faculty of composers, singers, instrumentists and dilettanti, *nunc et in saecula saeculorum!*

DA PONTE (much flattered.) O, you are too good, dearest maestro! Spare my modesty. In your opinion then I have produced a masterpiece?

MOZART (inspired.) Without the slightest doubt. *You, or the destiny of Mozart.* It now remains for us to combine the concerted pieces; in relation to which you shall receive from me, as you did for "*Figaro*," the most precise and circumstantial instructions. I will also give you the poetical thoughts of the arias, which shall characterize the persons as I conceive them. As to the action, there is nothing to be said.

DA PONTE. My rule, my metrical compass, my shears and file are at your service, and I will say all that your propose to do. You believe then, that our opera will rise to the stars?

MOZART. I know nothing about that, but I believe that sooner or later "*Don Juan*" will make some noise in the world.

ERNST IN SWITZERLAND. From Bâle, Ernst went to Zurich, and the day after his arrival he gave his first concert in the Casino. What gave to this concert a more than ordinary interest, was the presence of the unfortunate Countess Bathyanî, who was desirous of hearing the accom-

plished *virtuoso* whom Hungary had applauded and feted in happier times. Since the illustrious lady has inhabited Zurich, she has not been once to the theatre. Ernst played his famous solo on the Hungarian melodies, with that expression of tender poesy which always animates his execution. Tears were seen to flow from the cheeks of the Countess Bathyni, and the following day she was anxious to see and speak with the great artist, who had given her such sweet and profound emotion. This touching interview produced a deep sensation in Zurich and the vicinities.

[HENRI HEINE has written perhaps better verses for music than almost any man since Shakespeare. The following little wildflower of his fancy (of which we translate the form only, and the sense, so far as it is not for life or death involved in the untranslateable melody of the German words,) is the theme of one of ROBERT SCHUMANN'S most exquisite and unique melodies. It will be understood that in German, the Moon is masculine and the Sun feminine.]

#### THE LOTOS-FLOWER.

FROM THE GERMAN OF HENRI HEINE.

The Lotos-flower is troubled  
Before the Sun so bright,  
And with her head down drooping  
She dreaming awaiteth the night.  
  
The Moon he is her woorer,  
He wakes her with softest rays,  
And to him all friendly unveils she  
Her flow'r-sweet, innocent face.  
  
She blows and glows and brightens,  
And straightens up mutely again,  
Tears sheds she and odors, and trembles  
For love and for love's sweet pain.

J. S. D.

[Translated by the Editor.]

#### FREDERIC CHOPIN.

BY FRANZ LISZT.

#### III.

These aberrations of an over-excited feeling, which however never lessen the rare worth of the harmonic material — on the contrary they entice the initiated to a deeper study of it — are scarcely to be found at all in the more familiar and favorite compositions of CHOPIN. His *Polonaises*, which are less sought than they deserve to be — to be sure, it is very difficult to perform them perfectly — belong among the finest products of his inspirations. That they have nothing in common with the painted primness of ball-room, virtuoso and saloon *polonaises*, will be understood of itself. Their powerful rhythm electrifies the slack nerves of our *blase* indifference. The noblest traditions of the Polish national character are preserved in them: that firm determination and that earnest pride of the old Slaves steps forth from them to meet us. Almost all of them breath the warlike sentiment, together with the tranquil, thoughtful power, which was the inheritance of those Poles, who, following the maxim of Boleslaw, the duke of Pomerania: "First weigh it, then dare it!" combined the courage of the brave with that chivalric courtesy to women, which neither on the day before nor after the battle ever forsook those warriors, and which to the heroic king Sobiewski, "when the horse-tails of the Crescent were as thick before him as the ears upon a corn-field," suggested the tenderest letters to his wife.

In listening to many of CHOPIN'S *Polonaises*, you fancy that you hear the firm and heavy tread of men, advancing with the consciousness of courage against every turn of fate. In some of the

others this broad manner disappears. Especially in the *Polonaise-Fantaisie*, which belongs to the last period of his works, you perceive no more those bold and brilliant portraits; no more the lively step of that cavalry so used to victory; an elegiac mood predominates, which at the most is interrupted only by a melancholy smile.

The celebrated *Mazourkas* of CHOPIN wear an entirely different character from the *Polonaises*. Upon a wholly different ground play tender, pale and opaline *nuances*, instead of the juicy and strong coloring. The feminine — and even effeminate — element is no longer placed in a certain mysterious twilight, but advances into the foreground with such decided significance, that the other elements vanish before it or are banished into its train. Woman here appears the queen of life: Man, to be sure, is still spirited and proud, but lost in the dizziness of pleasure. In spite of this, there is a sad vein running through it. The national songs, in their melody and in their words, strike both these tones, and both bring out the singularly effective contrast, which results in real life from that necessity of cheering sorrow, which finds a magical narcotic in the grace and stolen charm of the *Mazourka*. The words, sung in Poland to these melodies, give them moreover the right to cling closer to the life of memory than any other dance music.

CHOPIN has happily appropriated to himself the popular melodies and transferred into them the whole merit of his labor and his style. In polishing these diamonds to a thousand facettes, he discovered all their hidden fire, and, even gathering up their dust, he set them in pearly ornament. Could there be a better frame, in which to enclose his personal recollections, poesy of all sorts, attractive scenes, episodes and romances? These now owe to him a circulation far outreaching their own native soil, and they belong at present to the ideal types, which Art surrounds with the glory of its sanction.

CHOPIN has set free from its bondage the secret essence of Poesy, which is only indicated in the original themes of the Polish mazourkas. While he has adhered to their rhythm, he has ennobled their melody, enlarged their outline, and magically introduced into many passages a harmonic *chiaroscuro*, which gives back that world of excitements and emotions, wherewith hearts are moved in the dance of the mazourka. Coquetry, vanity, fantastical humors, inclination, sadness, passion, the outgush of feelings, all are in it. To comprehend how admirably this frame suits these soul-pictures, which CHOPIN executes within it as with a pencil dipped in the colors of the rainbow, one must have seen the *Mazourka* danced in Poland; there only can one learn the whole that lies in this national dance.

Indeed one must perhaps have been in CHOPIN'S Fatherland, fully to understand and appreciate the character not only of his *Mazourkas*, but also of many of his other compositions. They almost all breathe that aroma of love and longing, which surrounds his *Preludes*, his *Nocturnos*, his *Impromptus*, like an atmosphere, in which all the phases of passion move by in succession. In all these compositions, as in every Ballad, every Waltz, every *Etude* of CHOPIN, lies the memory of a fleeting moment of life full of poetry, which he often so idealizes and spins his web out of such fine, ethereal threads, that they seem no longer to belong to our nature, but to the fairy world, and

sound like the chattering, confidential whisper of a Peri, a Titania, an Ariel, or of those elemental spirits, which likewise are subject to the bitterest illusions and to unendurable enneui.

Amongst the great number of his *Mazourkas*, too, there reigns a striking diversity of subjects and of the impressions they call forth. In many you hear the clink of spurs, but in the most above all the scarcely distinguishable rustling of erape and gauze in the light breeze of the dance, amid the flutter of fans and the jingling of gold and diamonds. Some seem to describe the lively enjoyment of a ball, which on the eve of a storming of the castle is as it were undermined with heaviness: you hear the sighs throughout the dance-rhythm, and the dying away of the farewell, whose tears it veils. Through others glimmers the anguish, the secret sorrow, which one has carried with him to the festival, whose stir cannot drown the voice of the heart. There it is a murmuring whirlwind, a delirium, through which a breathless and spasmodic melody is hurrying to and fro, like the impetuous beating of a heart, that breaks and perishes in love and passion. There again resound from afar bold *fanfara*, like distant reminiscences of glory and of victory. Some there are, whose rhythm is as vague and evanescent, as the feeling, with which two lovers contemplate the rising of a star in the firmament.

One afternoon — there were but three of us — CHOPIN had been playing a long time, and one of the most distinguished ladies of Paris felt herself overcome by a certain mournful feeling of devotion, somewhat such as comes upon us at the sight of grave-stones on those fields in Turkey, whose cool shades and beds of flowers hold out to the astonished traveller the promise of a cheerful garden. She asked him, whence the involuntary awe might come, which bowed her heart before monuments, whose exterior disclosed only what was soft and lovely to the eye, and how he would name the extraordinary feeling which he enclosed in his compositions, as if it were the ashes of unknown ones within sumptuous deeply hollowed alabaster urns? Conquered by the beautiful tears, which moistened such beautiful eyelashes, CHOPIN answered with an openness, that was rare with him, in cases which concerned the secret reliques he had concealed in the shining casket of his works. He told her, that her heart had not deceived her in its melancholy mood; since, bright and cheerful as he sometimes was, he could not free himself entirely from a feeling, which in a certain manner formed the bottom of his heart, and for which he found an expression only in his mother tongue, no other having a word corresponding to the Polish *Zal*. This word includes the whole gradation of feelings, which a deep grief engenders in the soul of man, from mere dejection and regret to bitterness and hatred.

And in truth it is this *Zal*, which gives to all of CHOPIN'S works their peculiar color. It is not wanting even in his loveliest reveries, — those in which BERLIOZ, that Shakspearian mind, embracing all extremes, saw with so accurate a glance "*de divines chatteries*";\* that is to say, the coaxing, flattering love-charm, which is peculiar only to the women of those semi-oriental countries, whereby the men are cradled by their mothers, fondled by their sisters, enchanted by their sweethearts, and in comparison with which the coquet-

\* Untranslateable. By *chatteries* Berlioz seems to have had in mind the playful fondling of little kittens.

ries of other women appear awkward and insipid to them, so that they exclaim with perfect justice: *Niema iak Polki!* (Nothing beats the Polish ladies!) That caressing, sportive nature, at once so full of *abandon* and of reserve, transports the heart into the wavering, aimless motion of a boat without sail or rudder.

In his playing, CHOPIN painted in a fascinating manner this wavering and heaving, letting the melody continually rise and sink like a boat upon the undulations of the mighty waves. In his works he indicated this manner, which lent such a peculiar stamp to his playing, by the mark "*Tempo rubato*." Latterly he left it out, persuaded that, if one correctly understood his compositions, it would be impossible for him not to divine this rule of irregularity. In fact his music must be delivered with that sort of accented and prosodically measured wavering, of which it is difficult to catch the secret, if one has not often heard him play himself. He took much pains to impart this mode of playing to his numerous pupils, especially his countrymen; and the Poles, or rather the Polish ladies, caught it with the talent and the tact, which they possess for every thing, that has to do with poesy or feeling.

[To be continued.]

## Dwight's Journal of Music.

BOSTON, MAY 8, 1852.

**RATES OF POSTAGE.** We receive many inquiries and complaints from out-of-town subscribers, who have been grievously taxed with postage on our Journal. This need not be. Subscribers have only to pay at the post office *by the quarter, in advance*, and the postage for this Journal, as fixed by law, is only *five cents* per quarter, for any distance not exceeding fifty miles, and *ten cents* per quarter for any distance not exceeding three hundred miles. By neglecting to pay in advance, subscribers are charged the high rates of *transient* newspapers.

### Mendelssohn Quintet Club.

The last of the public rehearsals took place in Cochituate Hall last Tuesday afternoon, and was an occasion of unusual interest. The Club had during the morning contributed the music to the academic exhibition at "Old Harvard." This was a pure *con amore* rehearsal, and the pieces very choice. There was none of the anxiety of preparation for a concert, but the real enjoyment of testing the virtues of good music in a circle of good listeners. First came MENDELSSOHN'S earlier Quintet, op. 18, a rich and varied banquet in itself, whose flavors never pall upon the taste, and whose guests never miss any of the old enthusiasm. Next, by way of variety, Mr. WULF FRIES "said" (as the present French musical critics express it) the Serenade of SCHUBERT on his violoncello, with quartet accompaniment.—Then came a Quartet by MENDELSSOHN, in E flat, with a pathetic slow introduction, a passionate Allegro, an Adagio of the profoundest melancholy, a quaint minor strain in the spirit of some wild old *Volkslied* or Ballad, and a bold finale:—in fact the whole, by its eminently impassioned character, now and then analogous to Beethoven's Sonata, might be distinguished as the "Quartet Pathétique."

But the last piece was the climax of this kind of inspiration. No words could describe that

wonderful Quartet of Beethoven, in C, though opening with chords that indicate no settled key, and in which the most fantastic and original humors of the man are worked out with a gigantic force of logic. Much of it reminds one of ideal landscapes of the boldest and wildest Alpine scenery, relieved with exquisite green spots where the sunshine loves to linger and tempt forth the innocent, sweet flowers. In one passage, the smooth commingling of the harmonic currents, with the cool feeling of deep, quiet waters, seems an unconscious presentiment of what is most Mendelssohian in MENDELSSOHN. To crown the whole with glory, a fugue-theme, of unusual length and florid figure, is at last introduced by a single instrument, and, duly answered by the others in their turns, is wrought up with surprising power and beauty. It tasks the utmost hardihood of execution, but at the same time inspires the courage (without which man would not be so much above machines and animals) to essay even the Impossible.

Mr. AUGUST FRIES, the genial leader of the Club, sails this week for Europe. A pleasant summer to him in his native Germany, and may he bring back fresh inspiration from that real home of Art, as well as more "treasures new and old" of its choice music. Another season will, we trust, show the "Mendelssohniens" that a hearty and a *paying* audience has at length been moulded by their potent, plastic spell into a true and constant sympathy with what they may undertake for us in the way of genuine classic music

### Mlle. Clauss.—An American's Description.

This rising star among the pianists, of whom we have already transferred some notices from the French papers, has excited the interest of "Spiridion," the lively Paris correspondent of the *Atlas*, who thus tells her story:

"Picture to yourself a beauty of the Saxon race: a beautiful, smiling, and yet poetical face, set off by silken pale blond ringlets, eyes of limpid blue, lips perhaps rather too large, but bright as rubies, and full of frankness, innocence, and kind-heartedness, hands small as an infant's, so delicate that you may trace the blue veins in them—a timid, modest, embarrassed woman. A face of that chaste, divine, melancholy, loving expression which characterizes the women of the Saxon race; which seems formed by God for the solace of some happy heart, for a mother and for a home.

"What does she here? Why have precocious sorrows traced their lines on that face, made to be loved and to be sheltered even from the rougher winds of heaven?

"Alas! the common tale: Misfortunes and poverty. Her father died before she was out of the nurse's arms, the mother strained her resources to educate her; she evinced some talents for music; new privations were supported; other efforts were made to cultivate these gifts. The child was now grown to be the girl of eighteen; it was time she contributed to the common stock.

"Mother and daughter came to Paris, to thrust their hands in the great wheel where so many skinny fingers are seeking to secure prizes. This was about the close of last winter. Mlle. Clauss played in some drawing-rooms, and once in a grand *matinée musicale* of Berlioz, but she was unnoticed; even the musical journals and the *feuilletons* of Tuesday, which spoke of the beautiful concert-room, the fine eyes of Mme. Frezzolini, and the talents of Berlioz, seemed unconscious of her existence. . . . All she wanted was a line—one God speed you!—that she might give her own concert with some chance of success.

"She knew that she had but to be heard, and her success was assured; but Paris, so cordial, so kind to the

famous, is completely indifferent to the obscure. It cannot be otherwise, so many appeals are made to her, so much mediocrity boasts the wand of genius.

"Unaided as she was, her concert must be given. Her mother, who had health and energy of character, went to printers, music sellers, critics. The poor girl was discouraged. She would not stir out of her house. She sat all day long on the piano stool, seeking consolation from her instrument. She had become pale and emaciated. Many a time her poor mother awoke in the night and looked to see if her child slept, and the child, to quiet her mother, hastily closed her eyes and feigned sleep. At last the great day was at hand, all the tickets had been sold and the bills printed. Suddenly Mme. Clauss falls sick, she becomes worse, her physicians give her up, she is delirious, she is dying, she is dead. The poor orphan throws herself upon her mother's corpse, bathes her cold hands with her tears, and almost reproaches her by her sobs to have gone and not taken her away too.

"Fortunately, they knew Mme. Sabbathier Ungher. This benevolent lady took her home and became a mother to her. Her kindness re-established her health, she returned to Paris this winter, and is famous. Thalberg and Herz and Liszt proclaim her the first of living performers."

**A GOOD SUGGESTION.** Many plans for reforming the system of Musical Notation are now agitated. Some of these would modify the common mode of representing music to the eye only in certain particulars; others proceed against it root and branch. All of them set forth a goodly show of reasons; but the difficulty is to turn the current of musical study out of its old channels into new ones, however straighter, plainer, easier these may be. But now and then a very slight change is suggested, which has but to be seen to be adopted, and which, once adopted, is fraught with conveniences quite out of proportion to the modest magnitude of the change itself. Such seems to us the very simple modification of the Staff, proposed in the following letter.

To those who sing at sight plain parts within a moderate compass, our old system of five lines is clear enough. But where added or *leger* lines abound, as in almost all instrumental music, the eye of the reader is often perplexed with the multitude of parallels; and it is hard to tell, without borrowing too much time for it, where the main lines of the staff leave off and where the added lines begin. This perplexity is simply and perfectly avoided by the suggestion of our correspondent. Let any music publisher adopt it in some standard publication, and we see not how it can fail to pass into universal practice.

But we let the originator of the idea speak for himself.

PORLAND, Me.

MR. EDITOR:—It has occurred to me that an improvement may be made in the Staff upon which notes in music are written, by having the upper and lower lines made of double thickness, also of the added lines the fourth above or below, thus:

[See Hunten's Instruction Book, page 93.]

Ex. I.



Ex. II.



The advantages are, that in reading the leger lines at sight, there will be less hesitation in determining the letters; for often the short lines, being run together, leave the mind in doubt for an instant as to what those letters are; because the eye does not distinguish the fifth line on the Staff from any other.

Again, there will be less effort in reading notes, because having these prominent points to judge from, the eye will perceive not only with greater ease, but certainty, either in the bass or treble staff, thus assisting the experienced performer as well as the beginner.

I would, through your valuable journal, submit the idea to publishers of music for their reflection, hoping, if it be an improvement, that the musical public may be benefited by it.

ED. B. ROBINSON.

### The Concert of Senora de Ribas.

There is an inherent difficulty in Complimentary concerts. The very effort to multiply attractions involves the fatality of a loss of unity in the programme, which seriously impairs the interest in a merely musical and artistic view. The musical interest has to give way somewhat, while the personal interest becomes the primary. All are anxious to lend their aid in making the compliment a solid one; many of the professional fraternity volunteer, and great as may be the heartiness of the thing, as well as the richness of material assembled, still it seldom hangs together well as an artistic feast. It almost always turns out that the bill of fare is too long, too miscellaneous, and that the viands it enumerates have been too hastily cooked.

This applies to nearly *all* such concerts, and of course it is no disparagement to that of Saturday last to own that it did not wholly escape the common fatality. In spite of the drenching rain, that flooded every thing, commencing but an hour before the concert, it was gratifying to see the Melodeon quite well filled; and it was an audience in the best humor to be pleased. The orchestra embraced most of the resident talent; but the putting together was partly new; some, who were expected, failed, and substitutes had been called in at a moment's warning; the foresight of rehearsals therefore had been balked; and so the overtures moved forward rather confusedly and lamely. Especially that first one, to *Massaniello* — not Auber's, but Caraffa's — which opens with a slow movement in which the horns had much to say, and said it very unintelligibly. So too the accompaniments about spoiled the Trio from *Don Juan*, which seemed to have been well enough studied on the part of the singers.

Senora DE RIBAS was warmly received, nor had her voice lost any of its flexibility or sweetness. The air from *Cimarosa* she executed with great beauty. Her two younger sisters, Miss JULIA and Miss EMMA GARCIA, pleased by the rich and musical quality of both their voices. Mr. ARTHURSON sang "Thou sweet flowing Avon," Dr. Arne's old song, in pure voice and style, accompanying himself. Senor DE RIBAS played Ernst's *Adagio Religioso* on his oboe with a breadth and rich warmth of tone, so feelingly modulated, that this intractable instrument seemed, thus skilfully coaxed, not so very far inferior to the violin in power of expression. The piano-forte solo by Mr. GARCIA, (*père*), was a very neat, light-fingered performance, and proved that there is some virtue in the old school. Messrs. RIHA and FRIES played their brilliant Duo Concertante, by Kalliwoda, with the usual *éclat*.

### A Few Words on an Opera House.

To the Editor of the *Daily Advertiser*:

SIR,—In an article under the above caption, which you did me the favor to publish on the 19th of June last, occur the following remarks:

"But, while the extensive canvassing which has been carried on by the friends of this project (the Boston Music Hall), has met with such signal success, it has further elicited in every quarter the unexpected, but most agreeable fact, that a large majority of the most influential class of our citizens,—of those in fact who pay for the erection of such buildings, and who patronize and enjoy them when erected,—desire an opera house in addition to the Hall, a *bona fide* opera house, of such a size and character as shall give them and their families the means of permanently enjoying the Opera in their own city, such as shall place Boston in the foremost rank of music-loving and music-supporting communities, and cause her name to be mentioned with the highest honors for a practical and earnest appropriation and patronage of art."

Your readers will have perceived, by recent announcements, that this long-desired project has at last taken a tangible form, and that the preliminary measures have already been commenced, in the appointment of a most influential and excellent committee. The same papers which make this announcement, however, couple with it the somewhat absurd statement that the intention is to build a theatre which will seat *five thousand persons*. This must certainly be unauthorized by any of those gentlemen who are intelligently interested in the matter, because they must be supposed to have looked somewhat into the subject, and of course to know that there is no such building as this existing as a regularly appointed theatre in the world. No theatre in London, Paris, St. Petersburg, Madrid, or Naples, *begins* to hold any such number, and it is well to take this early opportunity for setting the public mind right on such a point, to prevent exaggerated expectations, and subsequent disappointment.—Drury Lane Theatre, the largest in London, holds 3060 persons;—Covent Garden 2800,—and the theatres on the Continent, although many of them are somewhat larger in area, still, from the predominance of private boxes and the greater convenience of sitting room allowed, do not accommodate, in any instance that I am now aware of, more than the above-mentioned number. How unwise and unnecessary then would it be to attempt to do more than this, or to suppose that Boston could furnish audiences for which London has not thought it expedient to provide accommodation.

Many, even of these sittings, however, are, it should be stated, exceedingly uncomfortable.—Covent Garden with its 2,800 and Drury Lane with its 3,060 seats, exclusive of that

"No room for standing, miscalled 'standing room.' excite very invidious comparisons among the foreigners in London, and, according to Mr. Gwilt, cause a good deal of nightly torment to the English play-goers.

The arrangement of seats, and the extent to which the general capacity of the house should be allowed to infringe upon personal accomodation, is at once the most momentous and the most delicate question which the promoters of the present project will have to decide.

Let us suppose that the shape, which is thought least prejudicial to the effect of music by the majority of the *sound-doctors*, has been decided upon, and whether it be the semi-circle, the horse-shoe, the lyre, or the oblong parallelogram is all one for the purposes of the present argument. Two great considerations have yet to present themselves, which are strongly antagonistic in character,—two repugnant requisitions in fact, between which the projectors of an opera house are always compelled to choose. Like Desdemona, they "do here perceive a divided duty" between comfort and profit. They are to decide if the seats in the best portions of the house, whether stalls, chairs, couches, box seats or slips, shall be so packed, as to crowd a large number of persons into the given area, and thus make a house which will be re-

munerative to the manager at a moderate price of admission,—or, on the other hand, if they shall be arranged with some attention to the comfort of the occupants, thus reducing the paying capacity, and, of necessity, raising the price of admission to a point which the public will very reluctantly pay. On the one hand uncomfortable, pillory-like seats,—on the other unremunerative audiences and bankrupt management,—these are the *Seylla* and *Charybdis* between which they are doomed to steer. Happy indeed the stockholders who accomplish a successful passage. Of the first difficulty Bostonians in general know quite enough by sad and often grumbled at experience. Does not an hour in the parquet or boxes of the Boston Theatre or the saloon of the Museum, make one, with aching back and compressed knees, sigh for an arm-chair at almost any price, and dispose even the most money-loving citizen to purchase relief to the spine and the tortured *patella*, even at a hundred per cent. advance! Bolt upright on a shelf a foot wide, with his feet drawn under it and a narrow strip cutting across the "small of his back" to keep him in position, it is totally impossible for him to enjoy anything at all,—*Zerlina's* warbling and *Don Sylva's* thunder are all in vain for him.

Such are the accommodations to which we have hitherto been accustomed. On the other hand, the *La Scala* at Milan, the Grand Opera at Paris, the famous theatre at Bordeau, and perhaps it is not too much to say *above all*, the Astor Place Opera House in New York, present us with the other form of difficulty. The enormous area of the first named house, and the metropolitan character of the second enable the receipts to keep some pace with the expenditure, but it is a well known fact, and one of which the New York manager will readily satisfy the most incredulous, that large as is the Astor Place Opera House, Salvi, Marini, Bettini, and Bosio cannot be engaged there without serious loss to the management, even with a full house on every representation. Before the curtain, it is perhaps the most comfortable and even luxurious house in the world in the general character of its accommodations, though behind the curtain it is very small, ill-arranged and inconvenient. Between these two drawbacks, since we *must* class convenience as one of them, the limited capacity of the house has always prevented its being carried on to any pecuniary advantage.

Here then is a nice question, and one, the argument of which could be easily made to fill columns of your valuable space, were it allowable to do so. Let us see, in the end, how it will be successfully solved. That it *will*, I have too high an opinion of contemporary sagacity and application to doubt for an instant. Of course there will be a *competition* among the Architects, as it would be a gross piece of favoritism to give so large and important a public commission to any one, leaving all the others entirely unconcerned. Allow me to suggest, as the only safe and sure means of arriving at a fair result and of securing an informed and responsible tribunal of decision, that the building committee should secure the services of three eminent architects, *who do not themselves compete*, to advise them in their selection from the plans presented. This is the English practice, where such things have long been thoroughly understood, and there is no wonder that this is the only condition upon which their best talent can be induced to enter into public competition, since the real artist has often less to hope from an uninformed (I use this term professionally of course) or irresponsible tribunal, than the mere showy and vulgar pretender.

A. G.

Boston, April 29, 1852.

### Musical Intelligence.

#### Local.

BOSTON MUSICAL FUND SOCIETY. The public rehearsals for 1851-2 came to a close last week. The summer vacation will give the Society a breathing space, in which to recover from the confusion and discomfiture necessarily occasioned by the burning of their old head quarters in the Tremont Temple. The loss of their mu-

sical library, seeing that it was insured, will doubtless be more than made good with their present superior facilities and judgment for selection. On Monday the Annual Meeting took place, when the following officers were elected for the ensuing year:

For President, GEORGE J. WEBB; Vice President, THOMAS COMER; Secretary, JOSEPH N. PIERCE; Treasurer, S. S. PEARCE; Librarian, ISAAC MOORHOUSE; Auditor, WILLIAM BENNETT; Associates, W. VANSTANE and VINCENT DORN; Trustees, JONAS CHICKERING, GEORGE S. BIGELOW, J. P. BRADLEE, S. E. GUILD, JOHN BIGELOW; Consulting Physician, CHARLES G. PUTNAM, M. D.

MENDELSSOHN'S "ELIJAH." Many music-lovers will be gratified to learn that one of our enterprising music publishers contemplates issuing an elegant and cheap edition of this particularly favorite Oratorio. The great cost of the London edition, sumptuous as it is, has hitherto placed it beyond the reach of most of us.

MADAME GOLDSCHMIDT and her husband, we see it stated, have been prevailed upon by many of the citizens of Northampton to promise a private concert in that beautiful village, before they leave it. The proceeds will go to charitable purposes.

It is now confidently stated that the large-hearted Songstress has remitted to Sweden the last instalment of the \$150,000, which she dedicated to the foundation of Free Schools in her native country.

The NEWTON MUSICAL ASSOCIATION will give a concert, during the next or following week, in compliment to their conductor, SAMUEL JENNISON, Jr., Esq., to whose arduous "labors of love" in arranging, copying, composing and carrying through rehearsals, the Society owes so much of its success.

In Watertown a musical society has been formed, under the auspices of Mr. ASA R. TROWBRIDGE as conductor. It takes the name of "THE WATERTOWN CHORAL UNION."

In Baltimore, OLE BULL, assisted by JAELL and the GERMANIANS, has given two brilliant concerts. The papers speak of a new piece, for violin and piano, the joint production of Ole Bull and Jaell.

#### California.

MADAME BISCACCANTI. Great is the success, apparently, of our esteemed cantatrice in the land of gold. There is something quite refreshing, like a return to the days of our own musical youth, in reading full-fledged musical criticisms in the newspapers of that far off new world. If only for the curiosity of the thing, therefore, our readers will perhaps warrant our copying the greater part of one notice sent us in a San Francisco paper. It shows that a concert can be got up on a pretty good scale there already, and be well appreciated. The prices of tickets, we are told, ranged from two to five dollars.

SIGNORA BISCACCANTI'S SECOND CONCERT.—The American was filled last night with a highly intelligent and appreciative audience, among whom shone conspicuous a large number of fair ladies, to listen to the performances of Signora Biscaccanti, on her second appearance in California. The opening piece was an overture, "L'Italiano in Algerio," performed by the whole orchestra, under the direction of that accomplished musician, Mr. Loder. They exhibited the evidences of his careful training since the last concert, and proved that there is material sufficient to constitute, when more accustomed to each other, an orchestra of rare excellence. . . . The fourth piece was the opening song in Bellini's "La Sonnambula," "Come per me sereno," by Signora Biscaccanti. On her entrance, led by Mr. Loder, she was received with the enthusiastic plaudits of the audience. Her execution of this gem was in the highest degree finished, and called down a vociferous en core. In response to the call she again made her appearance, but contented herself with acknowledging her kind reception with most arch and bewitching grace. . . . The Signora again made her appearance, and this time in the English song, "I'm Queen of a Fairy Band." It took all hearts by storm, and in truth it is not to be wondered at, for never had a California audience listened to such exquisite melody, such bird-like song as fell from the lips of the fair cantatrice. Of course it was encored to the echo. Miss Coad, though evidently shrinking with timidity at following so celebrated a songstress as the Signora, was reassured by the kindly plaudits of her friends—and all appeared to be her friends—and sang the favorite ballad, the "Bells upon the Wind," with much sweetness and expression. The next piece was that most touching of Scotch ballads—

and none can express so much feeling as they—"John Anderson my Jo," by Signora Biscaccanti. We can hardly give utterance to the sensations this produced. The opening, joyous and confident, the finale, melting with tenderness, exhibited in perfection the Signora's great powers of expression. The prolonged gush of melody that prefaced each stanza was one of the most splendidly executed pieces of vocalization we have ever listened to. Loud, rich and full at first, it died away like the vibrations of a bell, and with as little break in the cadence, until it seemed as if the very silence that for an instant followed, could be heard. Though out of place, the applause that followed each repetition of this was irresistible. The two last lines were rendered in a low and touching strain, that went to every heart. In response to the most vociferous encores, she appeared, and seating herself at the piano, her beaming countenance turned towards the audience, sang with a world of expression, the well known ballad of Moore—"Believe me if all these endearing young charms." Amid the most enthusiastic applause, and a shower of bouquets, she retired. Part the third opened with an overture by the orchestra, after which Madame Foubert sang a pretty Spanish song, "La Manola," with great effect. She was called out to repeat it. "Porgi Amor," from Mozart's Opera of "Don Giovanni," showed the Signora possessed of new and most versatile powers. The Romanza "Una furtiva lagrima," from "L'Elisir d'Amore," by Signor Moreto, afforded, by his fine masculine voice, a pleasing contrast with the rich melody that had preceded. But how shall we describe the grand finale, "Ah non giunge," repeated by Signora Biscaccanti by universal request? She was evidently aware of the high expectations that had been raised, and seemed to have reserved her full powers to give effect to this exquisite gem. Her voice now raised in a burst of song—now sinking to the lowest and softest notes, sounded at times like the rushing breeze, and again like the gentle zephyr sweeping across the strings of the *Eolian harp*. It was the very perfection of music, and seemed to surround one with an atmosphere of melody. The audience were transported with enthusiasm, and the house resounded with the most rapturous applause. Again she repeated the concluding and most striking portion, and then, followed by the same demonstrations of delight, she retired. She had achieved and sustained a triumph. It is impossible in this already extended notice to enter into an analysis of the Signora's vocalization, and point out the many excellencies of her performance. The citizens of California have never listened to anything approaching her singing, and none, who enjoy and appreciate genuine music, will fail to hear her.

#### England.

Our last summary brought us through the opening performance of the two Operas, and the two Philharmonic Societies. We now resume.

ROYAL ITALIAN OPERA. Rossini's *Guillaume Tell* was brought out, twice at least, in grand style. Herr ANDER, called the first tenor in Germany, took the part of Arnold, in a manner which has been pronounced the best since Duprez was in his prime. We quote from the *London Mus. World*:

Herr Ander has a fine voice—a pure, legitimate tenor, with good notes de poitrine, and a fine command of them. His method of singing is admirable. He declaims well, phrases well, and executes with facility. Like all German singers, he is deficient in agility; but, unlike many of his compatriots, he has a good *portamento*, and his style is at once noble and devoid of exaggeration. His performance, on Thursday, of the music of Arnold, decidedly was the best we have heard since Duprez was in his prime. . . . In the duet with Mathilde, Herr Ander exhibited both passion and good taste, and the fine quality of his middle notes could not fail to strike the *connoisseur*. The defects of the new tenor are few, and easily amended. He, at times, forces his voice in the higher notes, and thereby impairs his intonation; while occasionally he gives way too much to impulse, and perils not merely the correctness of his execution, but the purity of his tone, which, almost throughout the register of his voice is remarkable. As an actor Herr Ander is natural, manly, and prepossessing; but to judge him fully in this particular, he must be seen in a part of greater dramatic importance than Arnold. Since the first appearance of Signor Tammerlik, the theatre (already rich in tenors) has not made so valuable an acquisition as Herr Ander.

The Guillaume Tell of Signor Ronconi is much superior to that of his predecessor, Signor Tamburini, although the peculiarity of his means forces him to alter, and therein not to improve a great number of passages in the recitatives, airs, and duets. In spite of this drawback (which was materially felt in the magnificent duet with Arnold, "Dove vai"), his impersonation of the Swiss patriot was very masterly, and he entered thoroughly into the spirit of Rossini's music. In the great *finale* of the second act, when the deputies from the various cantons meet to organize the plot against the Austrians, his acting was very striking, and he completely filled the stage with his presence. Perhaps Signor Ronconi's most impressive scene was that in which, at the command of the tyrant Gessler, Tell shoots the apple from the head of his son. A more pathetic piece of singing than the air (one of the most exquisite *morceaux* in the opera) in which he previously addresses Jemmy, bidding him be

firm and invoke the aid of Heaven, has rarely been heard, and rarely has an audience been more completely moved. The return of Signor Marini, who will be remembered during the two first seasons of the Royal Italian Opera, is a boon to the subscribers, who have now (with Herr Formes) two first-rate *bassi profondi* instead of one. The small part of Walter is only important in a musical point of view, and the fact of its being confided to such a singer as Signor Marini tells in favor of the liberal policy which the management appears bent upon pursuing. Signor Tagliacico, another old and deserved favorite, made his *ré-entrée* in the character of Gessler, to which his clever singing and intelligent acting imparted due importance. Of Madame Castellan's Mathilde it is only necessary to say that it was as good as ever, and that she sang the beautiful *aria*, "Selva opaca," and the duet with Arnold, with great feeling and purity. . . .

The orchestra and chorus were perfect. The overture was encored with acclamations, and a similar compliment was paid to the magnificent chorus, "Giuriam, giuriamo," at the end of the finale to the second act, in which the genius of Rossini has reached its highest flight. The execution of the whole of this picturesque and masterly scene was admirable. The chorus of the inhabitants of Uri, in A minor, "Guglielmo," which usually passes without a hand, was given with such crispness, and such a well managed *pianissimo*, that this was also redemande; and at the fall of the curtain Mr. Costa was compelled to come forward by unanimous desire. The opera was placed upon the stage in the most liberal manner as regards scenery, costumes, &c., and the performance in general was one of the most remarkable in the annals of the Royal Italian Opera.

Donizetti's *Les Martyrs* was to be given for the first time in England on the 13th ult. The cast included Tammerlik, Ronconi, Formes and Mme. Julienne; the last named lady bringing a high reputation, as a dramatic soprano, from Brussels.

Mlle. JOANNA WAGNER, whom we have seen even compared to GRISI, is announced as being exclusively engaged for the Royal Italian Opera.

HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE. (Lumley's.) On the 13th Rossini's *Italiana in Algieri* was to be revived for "the dashing and energetic Mlle. Angri." (By the way, Garcia, we believe, thinks her the only contralto besides Alboni, and for this reason wishes his new pupil, our own Adelaide Phillips, whose voice he finds to be a genuine first class contralto, to enter this interesting field.) Belletti, too, and Ferranti, were to take part.

"Vive la CRUVELLI" had become the word. This lady, crowned with Parisian laurels, was announced at her Majesty's to sing in *Norma*, on the 17th.

In spite of what is said above, Lumley also announces Mlle. WAGNER to make her *début* in *Romeo et Julietta*.

The programme of the second concert of the (old) PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY included, besides the *Pastoral Symphony*, three overtures: viz., Mendelssohn's *Meeres-Stille und glücklicher Fahrt*, Cherubini's to *Les Deux Journées*, and Weber's "Ruler of the Spirits." Piatti and Bottesini played a Duo concertante for cello and contrabass. The rest was vocal. Simms Reeves sang an Aria by Beethoven, from *Fidelio: Della vita*; and with Ronconi duet by Rossini: *I Marinari*. Ronconi sang an old Aria, by Stradella; Castellan, a scene by Mendelssohn: "*Infelice*"; and the two a duet by Mozart. This programme is said to have been entirely selected by her Majesty and Prince Albert.

JETTY TREFFZ had arrived in London; also the great German basso, STAUDIGL ERNST and VIEUXTEMPS were both expected.

THE SACRED HARMONIC SOCIETY repeated the "Messiah," according to the annual custom, in Passion week. The singers were Madame Clara Novello, Miss Dolby, Mr. Simms Reeves and Herr Formes.

CHAMBER MUSIC. Quintet Soirées (Mr. Ella's); Quartet Soirées (Herr Jansa's); Trio Soirées (Mr. Harris's, at Manchester); and classical piano forte soirées (Mr. Billet's, the Russian, and Mlle. Speyer's), still furnish forth the choicest programmes.

DUBLIN. The Musical Festival in commemoration of Moore passed off triumphantly.

The performances were opened with a monody and chorus, after the manner of the Grecian Drama, delivered by Mr. David C. Bell, professor of elocution, in a style which gave assurance of his accomplishments in the profession of which he is a distinguished master: then followed selections from the "Odes of Anacreon," the "Melodies of all Nations," "Lalla Rookh," the "Sacred and the Irish Melodies," — the second part having been opened with "Evenings in Greece," recited by Mr. Bell.



